

REMARKS

Applicant makes the claim amendments herein to remove multiple dependencies and to bring the claims into conformance with US patent application formatting rules and standards, not for reasons of patentability with respect to novelty or non-obviousness in light of the prior art. Also, the Applicant has not narrowed the scope of any claims by these amendments.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims for the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made."

Applicant respectfully requests a prompt examination and allowance of claims 1-46 and that the present application be passed to issuance.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

1. (Amended) A communications system [for linking participants at two separate locations], comprising:

first and second locations [each provided with at least one real time image capturing device, at least one image projecting device, an observation zone for occupation by a participant at that location and a two-way mirror through which images are viewed, the image capturing device(s) at each location being:] , wherein the second location is remote and separate from the first location, each of the locations comprising:

a real time image capturing device,

an image projecting device,

an observation zone for occupation by a participant, and

a two-way mirror through which images are viewed;

the image capturing device at the first location being:

(a) arranged to view [any] a participant occupying the [home location] observation zone at the first location directly or indirectly along a line of sight which passes through the two-way mirror at the first location, and

(b) linked to the image projecting device at the [other] second location whereby [the] a captured image is transmitted from the [home] first location to the [remote] second location and projected at the [remote] second location for viewing through the [corresponding] two-way mirror[,] at the second location; and

[at least one location being provided with] the first location comprising a visual [depth-cue means] depth cue physically located on [the] an opposite side of the two-way mirror relative to the observation zone, the visual [depth-cue means] depth cue being in the form of one or more physical objects visible through the two-way mirror from the observation zone so that [the remotely derived image of a remote participant] an image generated at the second location of a participant at the second location is seen through the two-way mirror at the first location in superimposed relation within a three-dimensional setting afforded by [said] the visual [depth-cue means] depth cue.

2. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 1 in which the [object or] one or more physical objects are visually located at positions forwardly and/or rearwardly of [the] a visual position of the [remotely-derived] image generated at the second location when the image is being projected at the first location, as viewed from the observation zone at the first location.

3. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 1 in which the setting comprises a chair, the back of [which is] the chair being visually located rearwardly of [the] a visual position of the [remotely-derived] image generated at the second location when the image is being projected at the first location, as viewed from the observation zone at the first location.

4. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 1 in which the setting comprises furniture selected from a group consisting of a desk, a table, a counter, and a console [or the like] visually located forwardly of [the] a visual position of the [remotely-derived] image generated at the second location when the image is being projected at the first location, as viewed from the observation zone at the first location.

5. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 1 in which the setting comprises a lectern visually located forwardly of [the] a visual position of the [remotely-derived] image generated at the second location when the image is being projected at the first location, as viewed from the observation zone at the first location.

7. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 6 in which a substantially full height image of [the remote] a participant at the second location is projected for viewing against the stage setting at the first location.

8. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 7 in which the [image] substantially full height image of the participant at the second location is visually positioned at a location intermediate [the] of forward and rearward extremities of the stage setting.

9. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 6 [or 7] in which the stage setting includes a background located rearwardly of [the] a visual position of the [remotely-derived] image generated at the second location when the image is being projected at the first location, as viewed from the observation zone at the first location.
10. (Amended) A system as claimed in [any one of Claims 1 to 9] Claim 1, in which the setting comprises a background located rearwardly of [the] a visual position of the [remotely-derived] image generated at the second location, as viewed from the observation zone at the first location, and means being provided for producing an image on the background for viewing through the two-way mirror.
11. (Amended) A system as claimed in [any one of Claims 1 to 10] Claim 1, in which the [remotely-derived] image generated at the second location is projected so that, from the observation zone at the first location, it represents [the remote] a participant at the second location as a substantially life-size [, optionally substantially full height,] image in relation to the setting.
12. (Amended) A system as claimed in [any one of Claims 1 to 11] Claim 1 including means for illuminating the one or more physical objects constituting [said depth-cue means] the visual depth cue.
13. (Amended) A system as claimed in [any one of Claims 1 to 12] Claim 1, in which the [remotely-derived] image generated at the second location of a participant at the second location comprises a background which is substantially non-visible when viewed through the two-way mirror at the first location by a participant at the [home] first location.
14. (Amended) A system as claimed in [any one of Claims 1 to 13] Claim 1, in which the two-way mirror is inclined relative to the line of sight of a participant stationed in the observation zone.

16. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 15 in which [the] a remotely-captured image is incident on the two-way mirror from a location below the two-way mirror.
17. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 15 in which [the] a remotely-captured image is incident on the two-way mirror from a location above the two-way mirror.
18. (Amended) A system as claimed in [any one of Claims 1 to 17] Claim 1 including means for adjusting at least one of, the image-capturing [device(s) and/or the participants] device and a participant in the observation zone, so that the eye-level of the participant is substantially aligned with the line of sight of the image-capturing device viewing the participant.
19. (Amended) A system as claimed in [any one of Claims 1 to 18] Claim 1, in which [the arrangement is such that the] remotely-captured images are displayed so as to create a stereoscopic visual effect when viewed from the [home location] observation zone.
20. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 19 in which the remotely-captured images are processed using light polarising elements to form pairs of images having different polarisations so that a stereoscopic image of [the remote] a participant is seen when viewed [at the home location] from the observation zone using polarised glasses, whereby the images are viewed at the [home location] observation zone using a viewer [, such as shutter glasses,] synchronised with the display of the alternating images.
21. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 19 in which the stereoscopic visual effect is produced by alternating between images of [the remote participant(s)] a participant captured from different viewpoints.
22. (Amended) A system as claimed in [any one of Claims 1 to 18] Claim 1, in which at least one of [said] the locations is provided with at least two image-capturing devices for viewing the participant(s) [at that location] from different angles and in which at least

one of [said] the locations is provided with at least two image-projecting devices linked to the [remote] image-capturing devices.

23. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 22 in which [the arrangement is such that the] remotely-captured images from the second location are displayed so as to create a stereoscopic effect when viewed from the [home] observation zone at the first location.

24. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 22 [or 23] in which [the] remotely-captured images are projected onto a retroreflective screen located at the opposite side of the two-way mirror relative to the observation zone whereby the remotely-captured images from the second location are viewed in retroreflection at the observation zone of the first location.

25. (Amended) A system as claimed in [any one of Claims 1 to 24] Claim 1 including means for tracking the eye position of a participant in the observation zone and means for adjusting the image-projecting [devices] device in dependence upon such tracked positioning.

26. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 25 in which the tracking means includes an item of headwear to be worn by [a] the participant in use of the system.

28. (Amended) A system as claimed in [any one of Claims 1 to 27] Claim 1 including means for correlating actions of a participant at the [remote] second location with the one or more physical objects in the [home] first location three dimensional setting so as to produce the impression of interaction of the image observed at the [home] first location with [such physical object(s)] the one or more physical objects.

29. (Amended) A communications system [for linking participants at two separate locations,] comprising:

a first location [provided with at least one] comprising:

a real time image capturing device, and

[a] an observation zone for occupation by one or more participants, the image-capturing device being arranged to view [that] the observation zone;

a second location [provided with at least one] that is separate and remote relative to the first location, the second location comprising:

an image projecting device linked to the image-capturing device at [said] the first location,

an observation zone for occupation by one or more participants at the second location,

a three dimensional setting with a visual depth cue [means] in the form of one or more physical objects viewable from [that] the observation zone of the second location, and

a two-way mirror [means] interposed between [that] the observation zone of the second location and the three dimensional setting,

the [arrangement] system being arranged such that [the captured image] an image captured at the first location is transmitted from [said] the first location to the second location and is projected at the second location for viewing of the [remote] participant(s) at the first location through the [corresponding] two-way mirror [means] in superimposed relation with the three dimensional setting.

30. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 29 in which a substantially full height image of the [remote participant] participant(s) at the first location is projected for viewing within the three dimensional setting of the second location.

32. (Amended) A system as claimed in [any one of Claims 29 to 31 incorporating the features of any one of Claims 1 to 28] Claim 29 further comprising a voice communication link between the first and second locations.

33. (Amended) A system as claimed in [any one of the preceding claims] Claim 29, in which [the] a visual person(s) to person(s) link between the locations is supplemented by a computer link between the locations.

34. (Amended) A system as claimed in [any one of the preceding claims] Claim 29, in which, in addition to [said] the first and second locations, there is at least one further location so arranged that a person at each [location] of the locations is able to communicate at least visually with a person at [at least one, preferably at each, other location] one or more of the other locations.

35. (Amended) A viewing arrangement for use in [a] the communications system as claimed in [any one of Claims 1 to 32] Claim 29, [comprising at least one image projecting device capable of being linked to an image-capturing device at a remote location, an observation zone for occupation by one or more participants, a three dimensional setting with visual depth cue means in the form of one or more physical objects viewable from that observation zone and two-way mirror means interposed between that observation zone and the three dimensional setting,] the arrangement being such that a captured image of the one or more participants at the first location is transmitted from [said remote] the first location to the image projecting device of the second location and is projected for viewing [of a remote participant(s)] at the second location through the [corresponding] two-way mirror [means] in superimposed relation with the three dimensional setting at the second location.

36. (Amended) A communications system comprising:
 at least one image projecting device capable of being linked to an image-capturing device at a remote location,
 an observation zone for occupation by one or more participants,
 a three dimensional setting with a visual depth cue [means] viewable from [that] the observation zone, and
a two-way mirror [means] interposed between [that] the observation zone and the three dimensional setting, the [arrangement] system being arranged such that [the] remotely-captured images are projected onto a retroreflective screen located at [the] an opposite side of the two-way mirror relative to the observation zone whereby the remotely-captured images are viewed in retroreflection at the observation zone.

37. (Amended) A communications system comprising:
 [at least one] an image projecting device capable of being linked to an image-capturing device at a remote location,
 an observation zone for occupation by one or more participants,
 a three dimensional setting with a visual depth cue [means] viewable from [that] the observation zone, [and]
 a two-way mirror [means] interposed between [that] the observation zone and the three dimensional setting, [and]
 means for tracking [the] an eye position of a participant in the observation zone,
 and
 means for adjusting the image-projecting [devices] device in dependence upon [such] tracked eye positioning by the tracking means.

38. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 37 in which the tracking means includes an item of headwear to be worn by [a] the tracked participant in use of the system.

39. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 37 in which the tracking means includes a camera [means] for observing the tracked participant and means for analysing [the] images captured thereby to determine eye positioning.

40. (Amended) A communications system [for linking participants at two separate locations], comprising:

first and second locations [each provided with at least one real time image capturing device, at least one image projecting device, an observation zone for occupation by a participant at that location and a two-way mirror through which images are viewed, the image capturing device(s) at each location being:] , wherein the second location is remote and separate from the first location, each of the locations comprising:

a real time image capturing device,

an image projecting device,

an observation zone for occupation by a participant, and

a two-way mirror through which images are viewed;

the image capturing device at the first location being:

(a) arranged to view [any] a participant occupying the [home location] observation zone at the first location directly or indirectly along a line of sight which passes through the two-way mirror at the first location, and

(b) linked to the image projecting device at the [other] second location whereby [the] a captured image is transmitted from the [home] first location to the [remote] second location and projected at the [remote] second location for viewing through the [corresponding] two-way mirror[,] at the second location; and

[at least one location being provided with] the second location comprising a visual [depth-cue means] depth cue physically located on [the] an opposite side of the two-way mirror relative to the observation zone, the visual [depth-cue means] depth cue being in the form of one or more physical objects visible through the two-way mirror from the observation zone so that [the remotely derived image of a remote participant] an image generated at the first location of a participant at the first location is seen through the two-way mirror at the second location in superimposed relation within a three-dimensional setting afforded by [said] the visual [depth-cue means] depth cue, and

the second location [arrangement] being arranged such that the remotely-captured images from the first location are projected onto a retroreflective screen located at the opposite side of the two-way mirror relative to the observation zone whereby the remotely-captured images from the first location are viewed in retroreflection at the observation zone at the second location.

41. (Amended) A communications system [for linking participants at two separate locations], comprising:

first and second locations [each provided with at least one real time image capturing device, at least one image projecting device, an observation zone for occupation by a participant at that location and a two-way mirror through which images are viewed, the image capturing device(s) at each location being:] wherein the second location is remote and separate from the first location, each of the locations comprising:

a real time image capturing device,

an image projecting device,

an observation zone for occupation by a participant, and

a two-way mirror through which images are viewed;

the image capturing device at the first location being:

(a) arranged to view [any] a participant occupying the [home location] observation zone at the first location directly or indirectly along a line of sight which passes through the two-way mirror at the first location, and

(b) linked to the image projecting device at the [other] second location whereby [the] a captured image is transmitted from the [home] first location to the [remote] second location and projected at the [remote] second location for viewing through the [corresponding] two-way mirror[,] at the second location; and

[at least one location being provided with] the second location comprising a visual [depth-cue means] depth cue physically located on [the] an opposite side of the two-way mirror relative to the observation zone, the visual [depth-cue means] depth cue being in the form of one or more physical objects visible through the two-way mirror from the observation zone so that [the remotely derived image of a remote participant] an image generated at the first location of a participant at the first location is seen through the two-way mirror at the second location in superimposed relation within a three-dimensional setting afforded by [said visual depth-cue means] the visual depth cue, and

means being provided for tracking [the] an eye position of a participant in the observation zone and means for adjusting the image-projecting [devices] device in dependence upon such tracked positioning.

42. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 41 in which the tracking means includes an item of headwear to be worn by [a] the tracked participant in use of the system.

43. (Amended) A system as claimed in Claim 41 in which the tracking means includes a camera [means] for observing the tracked participant and means for analysing the images captured thereby to determine eye positioning[.the arrangement being], the second location being arranged such that the remotely-captured images from the first location are displayed so as to create a stereoscopic effect when viewed from the [home] observation zone of the second location.

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT